A BRIEFE DECLARATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS

of the Peace that is now intreating of *betweene the King of* SPAINE, *the* Archduke, *and the Generall* States of the Vnited *Prouinces:*

Together with an Abstract of diuers weightie *Reasons and Arguments alleged by the Netherlanders,* to proue that the generall States ought not by any meanes to grant vnto the discontinuance of their trade and traffick into the EAST-INDIES.

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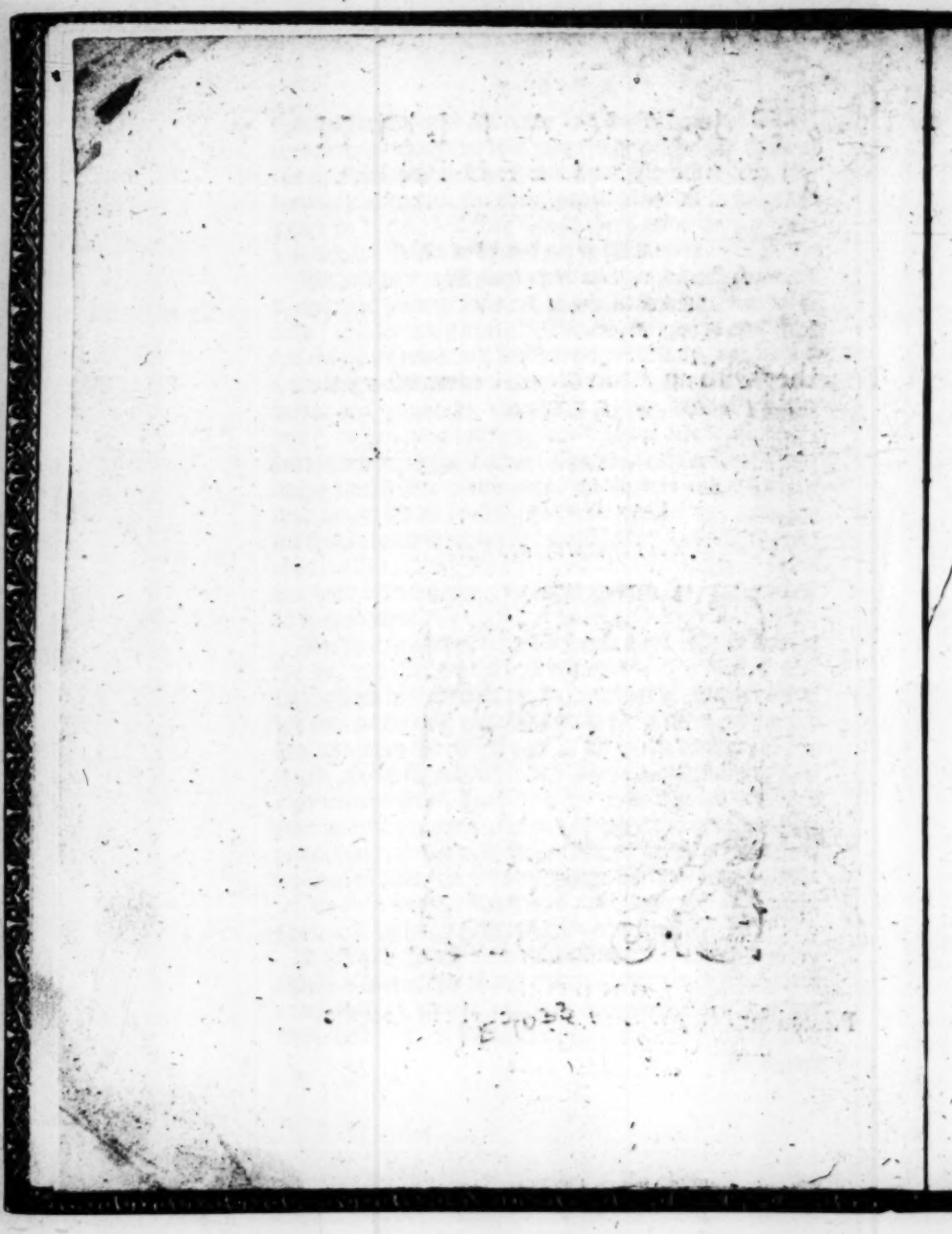

A briefe DECLARATION of the Proceedings of the Peace that is now intreating of betweene the King of *Spaine*, the *Archduke*, and the *Generall States of the Vnited Prouinces:*

Together with an abstract of diuers weighty Reasons and Arguments alledged by the Netherlanders, to proue that the *Generall States* ought not by any meanes to grant vnto the discontinuance of their trade and trafficke into the EAST-INDIES.

FIrst, that it is most certaine, that friendship, conuersation, and trafficke, are necessarie appendances of true peace, according to the generall lawes of nature, of all nations, and of ech kinde of people, conuersation and trafficke being shewes and apparances of friendship and true peace, which no man denieth or refuseth to grant vnto, but onely the enemie.

Such an example was neuer found nor knowen, that euer any peace was made and agreed vpon, with condition that conuersation and mutuall trafficke should be debarred and forbidden, for that should be no peace, but a true and certaine banishment, which is neuer found to fall out but betweene enemie and enemie.

Therefore the Spaniards (alledging and conditioning

that we ſhould leaue our trade and trafficke in the Indies) meaning is, that ſo by that meanes he might vſe thoſe of the Netherlands, that he ſhould finde and take there, like baniſhed enemies: for they would haue vs to keepe the peace in India, and they would there make warre vpon vs, and we ſhould be bound not to reſiſt them.

Which is a moſt ſure and certaine token, that firſt ſheweth an euident kinde of vnreaſonableneſſe and iniuſtice; and ſecondly a manifeſt deceit, by words and faire ſpeeches, offering vs a free ſouereaigne Eſtate, and in deed and effect would make vs much worſe then euer we were vnder our Princes, therewith ſaying, that we deſire peace, and in effect bring vs into a harder eſtate then euer we were during the warres, which is, that we ſhould willingly baniſh our ſelues out of the Indies, that therein they might vſe all kinde of hoſtilitie againſt vs, and that we ſhould beare it patiently. Laſtly, they ſhew forth their old practiſes, which are, that they can not intreat of peace but with diſſimulation, and that as then they are readieſt to make warre.

For that to alledge vnto vs (that muſt of force liue by the ſea, and that are the beſt merchants and chiefeſt ſeafaring men in the whole world) that we ſhould leaue off to vſe our trafficke & paſſage thorow the greateſt part of the ſea, and from the richeſt part of the whole trafficke of the world, is the ſhamefulleſt and vnreaſonableſt thing that euer man heard of, ſperially when as he ſeeketh to vſurpe that vpon other countries and kingdoms, ouer the which he hath no command, and ouer the ſea where he can forbid no man to ſaile, the vſe and paſſage whereof, (iure gentium) is open and free for all men, and whereof no man in the world hath any particular gouernment.

This alſo ſhould be an vndoubted and certaine ouerthrow & ſubuerſion of our Eſtate, which in this long and cruell warre, cannot continue nor proſper without free trafficke by ſea, it being the onely meanes, which God Almighty

Almightie hath vſed for our vpholding and maintenance; and by conſequence, as much as our trafficke by ſea ſhould leſſen, according to the ſame proportion the power and ſtrength of the land muſt of force be diminiſhed, for that without it, our townes and inhabitants thereof, can not be maintained, much leſſe can wee haue any publike aide by the rents and reuenues of the land, as other great countries and kingdomes haue, for our countrey is to ſmall; but all our wealth and power muſt come out of the ſea; and it is eaſily to be ſeene, for that as much of our aide as we ſhould loſe, if that we will leaue off our trade and trafficke in India, ſo much muſt we of force mille in our publike aide towards our maintenance.

By the Eaſt India accounts and company it appereth, that as now there are about 40. ſhips there in India, wherein there are 5000. ſea-faring men, and that they are to receaue from thence at the leaſt 300. tunnes of gold, which is 3000000. pounds ſtarling.

In Guyenna they trafficke yerely with about 20. ſhips, and 400. men, and there they returne euery yere about 12. tunnes of gold, which is one hundred and twentie thouſand pounds ſtarling.

To Puncto del Rey in the Weſt Indies, they vſe to trafficke with an hundred great ſhips, for ſalt, and with about 1800. men, which yerely deale for draught and ſalt, that coſteth nothing but the draught, and yet bring in ten hundred thouſand Gulderns, which is one hundred thouſand pound ſtarling.

The trafficke for Hides to Cuba in Eſpagnola, vſeth to maintaine 20. ſhips yerely, with 1500. men, and there is yerely ventured, not leſſe then eight hundred thouſand Gulderns, which is eighty thouſand pound ſtarling: which in all maketh 180. ſhips, 8700. men, and they returne 413. times an hundred thouſand Gulderns, which is 4130000. pound ſtarling.

Which being compared with all the reſt of our trafficke

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and sea-faring, it will be found, that this doth farre surpasse and exceede all our other trafficke and sea-faring, that we haue els where, both in stocke, number of well experienced sailers, and strength of shippes; and consequently that we leauing our Indian trade, should lessen and lose more then the halfe of our strength and power, not onely at sea, (without the which we can doe nothing) but also by land, for that all our might and power (for the reasons aforesaid) must come out of the sea.

This being duly considered, it is cleerely and manifestly found, that although no merchants trafficke in other countries, and no man goeth to sea, but onely for his own profit and aduantage, that notwithstanding the publike State should be much more interessed and hindered thereby, then the particular persons themselues: for besides this, that the publike State consisteth only of the particularitie, and that they make the publike State, and that the saide publike State is strengthened & becommeth mighty, according to the riches and wealth of the particularitie or Commons; yet it is most certaine that the particularitie can aid themselues without the publike State, but not the publike State without the particularity or Commons, for that particular persons going to inhabit in other countries, can from thence trafficke into India, as well as out of these countries, but the publike State must staie still at home, and behold it selfe lessened and much weakened in his forces, according to the diminishing of his trafficke, for that according to the proportion thereof, the number of the inhabitants decrease, and the force and power of the publike Estate weaketh.

Besides all this, consider that the sailers and sea-faring men, that are vsed by particular persons in trafficke by sea, are a mightie great number, that are maintained without any charge vnto the countrey, and daily practised and imploied at sea, that at all affaires and needes they may be vsed for the aide and defence of the land, without the

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which it is impossible to haue any power at sea, as we by experience see, that the mightiest kingdomes in the world haue no strength at sea according to the proportion of their powers, but onely according to the proportion of the trafficke that their countries haue.

From hence it is well to be considered, that the Spaniard by great policie setteth this before our eies to intrap vs, offering vs the soueraignty, that will afford vs no more power, but onely a dignitie, as the golden fleece doth, which he vseth to giue vnto the nobilitie of the Netherlands, for their vtter ruine and ouerthrow: and seeking to haue vs in regard thereof to leaue off the greatest part of our trafficke and sea-faring, that we thereby being more then halfe weakened of our power, he might the better attaine vnto his cruell intent, and that he, after that, might without feare breake the peace, and take all aduantages against vs.

Which is most sure and euident by their owne profession. For acknowledging that the King of Spaine onely ought to haue his Indies free and vnmolested vnto himselfe, hath moued this offer of peace, desisting from his former pretences, so it is not to be doubted but that the same is the only meanes whereby he should be moued to keepe the peace: for that according to the alteration of things, so the counsels and intents of Princes alter; specially also for that hereby it is euidently perceiued, that this offer proceedeth not from good will and affection that he beareth vnto the peace, or that he is weary of the warre, but onely because he feareth to lose his Indies, and that consequently it followeth that he will beginne to make warre againe as soone as he shall once be released of that feare.

Which shall be as soone as we shall haue left off our trafficke to the Indies: for that once done, it is impossible for vs euer after to set it vp againe, the companie being once dissolued, the Merchants being in other Countries,

and from thence trafficking thither, the Spaniards hauing cruelly reuenged themselues vpon the Indians that are our friends, and we with our faithlesse leauing of them, being fallen into hatred with the Indians, the matter would be vnreconcilable.

How could a more shamefull thing be heard of, than that we (that by the authoritie and commission of the States) which are confederate, by meanes of the company, with the Indians, should abandonate them to the discretion of so cruell an enemy, which they for our sakes, and vpon our promises, haue moued against them: and that we should take from our Merchants and Sea-faring men (that haue so much offended the Spaniards, that they may not abide to suffer them to come and traffike amongst them) the full traffike and dealing, that God, Nature, and the Lawes of all Nations giueth vnto them? whereas to the contrarie we ought to shew them all the like fidelity as we in our need and necessities haue found at their hands, for that they with so great danger of their liues and goods, with the losse of so much blood, and by so many honourable and valiant actions, haue compelled the Spaniards to this treatie of peace, and to acknowledge and confesse that it is they only that haue caused him to leaue off his pretences. Faith and fidelity do by no meanes permit that we should not seeke to maintaine the least and meanest of our Countrey men (which haue holpen, and put to their hands to support the common burthens and great charges of the land) in their estate and traffick, and much lesse that we should hinder and cut off the traffick of twenty thousand persons, which are participants in this treaty of peace; and so many expert and lustie seafaring men, that haue sailed vnto the Indies, and such as peraduenture may finde more meanes to reuenge themselues vpon vs, than the Spaniards can.

Our Forefathers in times past did take hard quarrels and warres in hand to maintaine their sea-faring and traffick,

traffick, which then was very small, and when as their whole stocke was not to be compared for value with the bare ships, with their furnitures that are in India, and we being so mighty and strong at Sea, that the enemy thereby acknowledgeth himselfe to be constrained to abandon and leave his own right, and to desire e sake peace, should with our owne consents, suffer our selues to be banished out of the two third parts of the whole world, where he hath no command, and where we to the contrary are the strongest.

We should buie this title farre too deare, for that in stead of being honoured thereby, it will bring vpon vs a great shame and contempt, not onely amongst our owne inhabitants, but specially out of the land, both amongst our friends and enemies. Our Inhabitants shall with good reason haue iust cause to be much offended thereat, to see that we abandon and forsake our traffick, and that they are compelled to withdraw themselues: our friends and allies will perswade themselues, that they are not to expect or repose any faith or fidelity in vs, when they shall see that we forsake our owne Country-men and the vnited Indians, that haue done vs so great good, and faithfull service, to obtaine a bare title: and perceiuing vs to be so much weakned in our power at Sea, (which is the onely thing wherewith we should haue the meanes to procure their good and to aid and assist them) would make no account of vs, so that we imbarking our selues in this ship of peace, vpon the assurance of our alliances, shall in the end finde our selues wholly deceiued.

And by meanes of the aforesaid weakning of our forces we shall of our selues be the onely meanes to prouoke our ancient and Capitall enemie to breake the peace, and to make warre vpon vs againe.

To allege that we should be content with the like traffick and seafaring, as we had before the beginning of the warres, is no other thing, but that our enemie would gladly see vs in the like estate of small power and strength

as we were in at the beginning of the warres, and to the easilier to intrap vs: from whence God defend vs.

It is also without any ground of reason, for that although before the warres we neither sailed, trafficked nor dealt in the Indies, yet we had both right and freedome to haue done it, Iure gentium, which was by no man taken from vs: for the King of Spaine being Lord of those Countries, had no lawful power in regard of his Spaniards, to take that from vs, for that by his oath, he was bound to maintaine these Countries and the Inhabitants thereof in their freedoms of trade and trafficke, vnder the which, without all doubt, the full vse of the Sea, of the aire, and of trade and trafficke throughout the whole World, was the cheefest thing: and doing otherwise he should haue dealt with vs cleane contrary to his oath: and there was neuer any mention or question made thereof that could be heard, till in the yeare of our Lord, 1596. when the Spaniards made an expresse Article thereof, in the transportation of the Netherlands vnto the Archduke, whereby the Archduke made himselfe (and not the Netherlands) seruile vnto the Spaniards; so that we still remaine in the freedome that we had before the beginning of the warres, the full sea-faring and trafficke of the whole World standeth open vnto vs, which but by warre and force cannot be taken from vs.

This proposition also is hereby manifested and made knowen, that they seeke by policie and deceit to deale with vs in this treatise of peace, for that the generall States being all by one consent fully resolued not to hearken vnto any treaty of peace, without they were first assured of the full and absolute freedome of the Land, first desired to haue assurance vnder hand and seale, to shew that the King of Spaine and the Archduke made promise to deale with vs, as with free Countries, wherein they pretend not any right or title.

And so entering into treaty, they would lay vpon vs

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the moſt vnworthie and ſhamefull ſeruitude, that euer was heard of. It is alſo expreſſly ſet downe and agreed that either partie ſhould hold that which he now poſſeſſeth, vnleſſe by common conſent it were agreed to forſake any places that they hold; and now they will diſpoſſeſſe vs of the moſt important poſſeſſion that we haue, which is, the poſſeſſion and free vſe of two third parts of the Sea, and the whole World. They will take from vs the places and traffiche of the Indies, with the greateſt halfe of our ſea-faring and power at Sea, without giuing vs any places in ſtead thereof.

To allege, that he in regard thereof forſaketh and reſigneth his title and pretence vnto theſe Countries, which he by his letters hath promiſed to giue ouer: and further, that he would take nothing from vs, but by conſent, and in etchange.

That they would giue vs the traffike and trade in Spaine in regard thereof, is but a vaine and meere toy. For that we haue alwaies had, and yet haue it at this preſent time, by meanes of other Countries, notwithſtanding his interdiction: and when he ſhould permit vs the free-dome thereof, we might well and ſafely goe thither, for that there conſiſteth more therein than euery man marketh or perceiueth, for that thereby he obteineth his great cuſtomes. Spaine ſhould be holpen by vs with victuals in time of famine, and we thereby ſhall put our ſtocke, men, ſhips and ordinance into his hands for hoſtage, thereby to maſter vs at his will and [illegible]ure, as he meant therewith to haue ouerruled vs, and would indeed haue ouerruled vs when he had his will, and forbidden vs trade and traffike in thoſe Countries, if we had not taken the Indian traffike in hand: and we thereby ſhall vndoubtedly be ouerruled, and wholly ouerthrowen, if we ſhould leaue our trade and traffike in India, for that it would be impoſſible for vs to beginne it againe, for the reaſons and cauſes before alleged.

Lastly, if we loke narrowly into this matter, we shall finde it to haue bene a thing altogether needlesse to take warre in hand, and to consume so much blood and money for our freedome, when we with our owne consent should make our selues seruile, and banished from the two third parts of the whole World. It was also needlesse for vs to oppose our selues against the Spanish Tyrannie, if we will subiect our selues vnder so Tyrannous a command, that we should not trade and traffike with all Nations, and also not with those that are not subiects vnto him. It was needlesse for vs to oppose our selues against the tenth penny (that would haue driuen all trade of Merchandise out of these Countreis) when we seeke to giue ouer the two third parts, or the greatest halfe of our traffike and Sea-faring.

The reasons and considerations that might yet be further alleged herein are innumerable: but these seeme to be sufficient to conclude and proue, that although we with all our hearts, good liking, truly, absolutely, generally, and vprightly desire a peace, yet we desire not (vnder colour and pretence thereof) to be deceiued and beguiled, and to be brought into more and greater seruitude than euer we were before, but that we persist and continue in our aforesaid common resolution, and in the letters, and vnder the hands and seales of the King of Spaine, and the Archduke, to deale in nothing else but for the maintenance of our freedomes (together with holding all that which we presently possesse) without the which we would neuer haue taken this treaty of peace in hand.

Herein neuertheless the aduerse partie should thereby be holpen, that peace should be made and agreed vpon in Europe, and that all the rest of the world should continue in warres, although the same is wholly contrary vnto the meaning of the generall States: which is no other but to establish an vpright sincere peace, friendship, mutuall conuersation, and traffike generally and without any limitation:

mitation: he ſhould nevertheleſſe make no difficultie to leſſen the warre in ſome part, and ſo farre as by conſent were permitted vnto vs, and to appoint the limits thereof at his diſcretion, for that the ſame part that by his limits were excluded, ſhould ſtill continue in warres, and that with the offenſe and hurt that thereby might be done vnto the one or the other of the parties in Europe, the peace ſhall not be vnderſtood to be broken: and that alſo for their ſakes in Europe, within the appointed limits, no reparation ſhall be ſought for, or may be taken.